

SANCTUARY WATCH

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RECREATION

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*Astonishing Tales from
the Sanctuaries:
Bruckner Chase*





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Astonishing Tales from the Sanctuaries:
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DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Recreation in our national marine sanctuaries represents a fundamental American value, and a driver of jobs and the economy. Protecting this ethic and lifestyle is paramount in our mandate.

I grew up loving being on the water and spending time off Long Island fishing with my friends. It was those experiences that taught me not only how to catch fish, but to appreciate the ocean and all it has to offer. From my time on the water I learned about the ocean, about wind, waves, tides, currents and marine life. I also learned to boat, swim and dive, all for recreation. I essentially learned about ecosystems around the world and especially in sanctuary waters. Sanctuaries provide so much for all of us, yet not everyone seems to understand what sanctuaries are.

A recent survey by the Ocean Project asked Americans the question, "What are national marine sanctuaries?" Many responded that they believe sanctuaries are areas closed to fishing and other recreational activities. The fact of the matter is that just two percent of sanctuary waters are closed to any type of recreation.

Does the dictionary have it wrong? If you look up "sanctuaries," it reads: **sanctuaries** noun pl. (1) a place of refuge and protection; (2) a refuge for wildlife where predators are controlled and hunting is illegal. Is our title adding to the confusion about the role of sanctuaries? I think the answer is both yes and no.

The first definition is the correct one, as it applies to national marine sanctuaries. Sanctuaries are places of refuge, places where Americans can enjoy recreation from swimming to fishing to scuba diving. They are, of course, also areas of protection. Because without protecting our underwater ecosystems from injury due to overuse or other impacts, many recreational opportunities would not be possible. This is why sanctuaries provide the public a voice in their long-term goals and planning.

The second definition, however, is at the root of some of the misconceptions about sanctuaries. While the primary purpose of the National Marine Sanctuary System is to protect these areas, we also allow compatible uses that include all types of recreation. On that note, 98 percent of all national marine sanctuary waters are open to recreational fishing, diving, surfing and swimming activities, to name a few.

In this issue of *Sanctuary Watch*, we wanted to share some stories about the value of having these areas open for recreation and explore the diverse leisure activities within the sanctuary system.

So, dive in! Sanctuaries are your place of refuge, and careful management of these areas ensures the long-term protection of our nation's underwater treasures for the enjoyment of all Americans.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Basta, Director
 Office of National Marine Sanctuaries

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IMAX Film Producers Kick off Global Ocean Campaign

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES PARTNER WITH MACGILLIVRAY FREEMAN FILMS ON “ONE WORLD OCEAN” INITIATIVE



Photo: MacGillivray Freeman Films

NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the world’s leading producer of giant-screen IMAX films will support each other’s commitment to improve the health of the ocean with a new campaign, “One World Ocean.” MacGillivray Freeman Films of Laguna Beach, Calif.,

launched the multi-year, multi-platform global media project, which will include an IMAX 3D film, an eight-part 3D television series, a theatrical 3D documentary, a Web series, museum exhibits, companion books, a social action campaign and more. NOAA will provide scientific and

educational support for the outreach programs and media projects destined for international museums and science centers, as well as television and Web-based media.

At the heart of this endeavor is MacGillivray Freeman’s dedication to producing films for global audiences that celebrate and inspire conservation of the ocean. Prior ocean-themed IMAX films by MacGillivray Freeman received Academy Award nominations, and their film *Coral Reef Adventure* helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for ocean conservation projects. With more than \$1 billion in worldwide box office success after 35 years in the business, MacGillivray Freeman is committed to making One World Ocean a monumental experience that will reach, connect and inspire millions.

Filming for One World Ocean started last year and will continue at 40 locations around the world over four years, resulting in 10 hours of programming anchored by a 40-minute 3D IMAX theatre film produced by MacGillivray Freeman. The promotional campaign will begin in 2012 and the television and film releases will premiere in 2015.

NEW SANCTUARY SUPERINTENDENT ANNOUNCED

On Jan. 13, the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries announced the appointment of Malia Chow as the new superintendent of Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary. Chow has worked for NOAA for the past 10 years, serving most recently as the sanctuary’s management plan review coordinator. Previously, she was a policy analyst for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve, which became the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.

Chow was raised on the island of O’ahu. She received a bachelor of science degree from the University of Washington and a Ph.D. in cellular biology from the University of Pennsylvania. She will be located at the sanctuary’s Honolulu office in Hawai’i Kai.

Lost Whaling Ship Discovered at Papahānaumokuākea WRECK IDENTIFIED AS TWO BROTHERS, LINKED TO “MOBY-DICK”

Maritime heritage archaeologists working with the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries have found the wreckage of the infamous 1800s Nantucket whaling ship *Two Brothers* on a reef off French Frigate Shoals in the remote Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, nearly 600 miles northwest of Honolulu. The *Two Brothers* was captained by George Pollard Jr., whose previous Nantucket whaling vessel, the *Essex*, was sunk by a whale and became the inspiration for Herman Melville’s famous novel, *Moby-Dick*.

A 2008 research expedition to Papahānaumokuākea provided the initial clues about the final resting place of the *Two Brothers*, when maritime archaeologists spotted a large anchor followed by other artifacts pointing to the wreckage of a whaler from the early 19th

century. Additional missions in 2009 and 2010 supported that claim, and historical research led the team to identify the lost ship as the *Two Brothers*. The discovery is an exciting addition to our knowledge of the history of whaling and how it connected diverse places and cultures around the world.



Photo: Greg McFall

Catching the Wave

SURFING IN THE NATIONAL



Photo: Walker Langley

Several of the world's most famous surf spots are found within the sanctuaries, like Pipeline (above) and Waimea Bay (background) on the famous North Shore of O'ahu.

Mavericks. Waimea Bay. Pipeline. The names evoke images of pumping surf, the raw beauty of ocean swells exploding on solid reefs, and crowds gathered to watch in awe as expert surfers take on world-class waves.

These places are some of the most revered surf spots on Earth, but there's another thing they have in common, something that few people realize: They are all found within national marine sanctuaries.

Surfing's Hawaiian Roots

A deep spiritual connection to the ocean is ingrained in Hawaiian culture.

One of the best-known expressions of this connection is through the sport of surfing, which can be traced back through Hawaiian ancestry to the art of *he'e nalu*, or "wave sliding." Dr. Carlos Andrade, director of the Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, said Hawaiian royalty — men and women alike — were noted for their ability as surfers. In fact, Andrade said, the whole of the population celebrated the activity, with entire villages emptying to go surfing when the waves arose.

Over time, surfing has grown from its Hawaiian roots to become a global phenomenon. The art of wave sliding has evolved to include

big wave charging, barrel riding, and spectacular aerial maneuvers. But while surfing has become a part of mainstream culture, for many surfers it's a way of life symbolized by the same link to the ocean felt by the sport's originators on the shores of Hawai'i.

"Surfing is one of the greatest gifts Hawai'i gave to the world," says Stuart Coleman, author of "Eddie Would Go," and the Hawai'i regional coordinator for the Surfrider Foundation.

Riding Waves in the Sanctuaries

Hawai'i may be the birthplace of surfing, but it is by no means the only place with great waves. National marine sanctuaries encompass some of the nation's most celebrated places for ocean recreation — surfing included. In fact, sanctuaries feature high-profile professional contests at some of the largest rideable waves in the world, from Mavericks in central California to the Quiksilver in Memory of Eddie Aikau at Waimea Bay on the North Shore of O'ahu.

The legendary "shoot-outs" between surfing champions Kelly Slater and Andy Irons at Pipeline, arguably the most famous wave on Earth, took place within the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, one of the most important humpback whale mating, calving and nursing grounds in the world.

MARINE SANCTUARIES

by Joe Paulin & Mike Murray

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the largest marine sanctuary, is home to the powerful and massive waves of Mavericks, as well as more modest — but no less popular — breaks like Steamer Lane in Santa Cruz, Calif. Countless other surf spots can be found throughout the coastal waters of the sanctuary system, supporting thriving recreational use and tourism.

Conservation: A Common Goal

“Conservation and surfing are like two sides of the same coin,” said Dr. Marc Lammers, a cetacean biologist and assistant researcher at the Hawai’i Institute of Marine Biology. “I don’t know how you could be a surfer and not care about the marine environment. Surfers and sanctuaries pretty much care about the same thing: the well-being of the ocean.”

Clean water, trash-free beaches and healthy ecosystems are just a few of the shared concerns that matter to the surfing community and sanctuary managers alike. Water quality, in particular, is an issue that presents opportunities for surfers and sanctuaries to work together.

“[Surfers] are indicators when it comes to water quality,” said Coleman. “We’re the first to experience it and the first to get sick.” Sanctuary staff throughout the U.S. mainland and Pacific Islands are working

with community members, agencies and organizations like the Surfrider Foundation on efforts to improve water quality and reduce marine debris.

Lammers, an avid surfer and former sanctuary advisory council member, said marine debris is an ever-present reminder of our impact on the ocean environment. “When you spend a lot of time on the water you start to notice that there’s plastic bags everywhere and all kinds of debris,” he explained.

Protecting the Waves

Surfers spend countless hours in the ocean connecting with nature, becoming immersed in their surroundings and soaking up an intimate knowledge of local coasts, beaches, and reefs. “Surfers are familiar with the wildness of the sea,” said Dr. Michael McGinnis, a coastal California native, lifelong surfer, and professor of Environmental Policy and Governance at the Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. “Even though many of us were raised in suburban environments, it was the sea that taught us the first lessons of wildness, and why we need to protect wild places.”

Indeed, surfers can bring valuable knowledge and experience to the cause of conserving and managing our national marine sanctuaries. They are welcome additions

to sanctuary advisory councils, volunteer programs, and other organizations engaged in ocean conservation. “We spend so much time in the water we could be first responders,” suggested Coleman.

“I think that the more you surf and just enjoy the ocean, the more appreciation you have for it,” said Doug Cole, executive director of the North Shore Community Land Trust. “Sometimes you just have to get out there in it to remind yourself that — wow — this really is a special place, and we could do more to keep it special and help others in their work to keep it healthy.” 🐬

The contributors of this article are surfers who work with Channel Islands and Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale national marine sanctuaries. We were deeply saddened by the recent passing of Andy Irons. Our thoughts and best wishes go out to the Irons Family, friends, and all those whose lives Andy touched and inspired.

Use your smartphone to scan this code for additional photos, videos and more from the top sanctuary surf spots, or visit:



<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/qr/surfing>

Background Photo: Fiona Langenberger





Photo: Bernard Testemale

KELLY SLATER | Professional Surfer

Surfing's Greatest Champion Speaks out for Ocean Conservation

Ten-time surfing world champion. One of GQ magazine's "25 coolest athletes" of all time. The most dominant

competitive surfer in the history of the sport. A living legend.

When it comes to Kelly Slater, the list of accolades goes on and on. During his 20-year career, he has crisscrossed the planet in search of perfect waves, winning 45 world tour events and capturing the Association of Surfing Professionals title a record 10 times. But on top of his unparalleled surfing success, this soft-spoken native of Cocoa Beach, Fla., is also a champion of responsible stewardship of the ocean.

On countless occasions, Kelly's travels have brought him to the waters of our national marine sanctuaries, home to such famous surf spots as the Banzai Pipeline and Waimea Bay in Hawai'i and Mavericks off central California. He has won no fewer than seven major surfing tournaments in sanctuaries, most of them within the waters of Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, which encompasses Oahu's famous North Shore. Many surfers ride waves within the sanctuaries, Kelly said, without realizing these areas are part of the National Marine Sanctuary System.

"I think it's worth letting people know that these amazing places are protected, both for their natural beauty and their recreational value," he said.

All the time Kelly has spent in the water has made him keenly aware of the many threats — declining water quality, for instance — that are harming sensitive ocean ecosystems and posing grave risks to the health of surfers and other ocean users.

"When we surf after the first rain of the year, a lot of people get sick because so much washes out of the rivers and streams," he said. "Surfers are some of the first ones to experience those impacts."

Recently, Kelly spent time filming *The Ultimate Wave Tahiti 3D*, a cutting-edge IMAX film that documents the beauty and culture of Tahiti and historic surf of Teahupo'o, considered by experts to be one of the world's most extreme waves. NOAA personnel served as scientific advisors for the film and helped develop the companion "Educator's Guide," which provides teachers with additional ocean science information and lesson plans.

While on location in Tahiti, Kelly also collaborated with NOAA to produce a PSA promoting NOAA's "Please Care" campaign to encourage ocean-friendly practices in our daily lives, from recycling to making "green" consumer choices. He said he welcomed the opportunity to bring attention to the cause of keeping our ocean and coasts in good condition for the future.

"This is something we can all make a difference in," Kelly said. "As surfers, we owe it to ourselves and to each other to work toward a cleaner, healthier ocean."

Scan here to watch an ocean PSA featuring Kelly Slater, or visit: http://www.noaa.gov/features/04_resources/psa.html



Kelly Slater, the most successful professional surfer in history, has won numerous tournaments in the waters of the national marine sanctuaries.

Photo: Greg Rabejac



red LIONFISH

beautiful invaders

With distinctive reddish and white stripes, gracefully flowing fins and menacing spines, few fish embody the beauty, mystery and danger of the ocean quite like the red lionfish.

The long, venomous spines that cover these fish are mainly defensive, delivering a painful sting that deters potential predators (including humans). It's such a formidable form of protection that very few creatures are known to eat lionfish, leaving them free to dine on a menu of more than 50 species of fish and invertebrates.

Lionfish can reach lengths of up to 20 inches and live for as long as 15 years. These fast-growing fish become sexually mature in less than a year, and a single female can spawn more than two million eggs each year. Larvae can hitch rides on ocean currents, traveling great distances. All this can add up to a lot of lionfish.

Although native to the Indo-Pacific region, lionfish were likely introduced to the Atlantic through the

aquarium trade and are now found along the East Coast of the U.S. from North Carolina to Florida and in the Bahamas and Caribbean.

Far from their natural home, lionfish aren't welcome. Their lack of predators, voracious appetite, rapid reproduction and fast growth spell trouble for the balance of invaded ecosystems and fisheries, since they can quickly out-eat and out-breed their native competitors. Imagine a coral reef with nothing but lionfish — it isn't as pretty, or as healthy, as a reef filled with a variety of colorful fish.

In Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, however, local residents are being encouraged to take a stand by removing as many lionfish as possible. "Derbies" hosted by the sanctuary and the Reef Environmental Education Foundation offer prizes to the teams rounding up the biggest catches, in addition to educating divers on how to safely handle — and eat — these spiny invaders.



- Native Range
- Invasive Range

COMMON NAME: Red Lionfish
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Pterois volitans*
MAX. LENGTH: 20 inches
MAX. WEIGHT: 2.6 pounds
DISTRIBUTION: Native to South Pacific and Indian Oceans; non-native in U.S. Atlantic, Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and eastern South American waters
DIET: Fish and invertebrates
STATUS: Not threatened

Use your smartphone to scan this QR code or visit <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/qr/lionfish> for lionfish videos, recipes and fishing tips!





Fishing is a popular recreational activity throughout the national marine sanctuaries. Thousands of people enjoy the sport in sanctuary waters every year, generating millions of dollars in communities like the Florida Keys.

GONE FISHING

by Matt Dozier

It's before dawn in North Key Largo, Fla., and Jack Curlett is already out on the water. He guides his 18-foot skiff through the channels of Florida Bay in the ethereal early-morning light, gliding past spoonbills and egrets wading in the shallows. As the sun rises, it streaks the inky purple waters with shimmering orange and gold, spreading until the entire bay seems bathed in fire and the divide between sea and sky almost disappears.

Curlett will spend the rest of the day fishing in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Like many recreational fishermen, he says the experience of being out on the water is just as important as catching fish. “You do it for the enjoyment, for the escape — for the thrill of seeing what’s out there,” he said. “It makes you feel reborn.”

A Passion for the Water

For Curlett, a yacht broker who has lived in the Keys for the past 26 years, fishing is a way of connecting with nature and spending time with his family and friends. On the West Coast, Eric Kett, who has been fishing and diving in and around California’s Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary for more than 20 years, echoed Curlett’s sentiments. “When you’re fishing with someone, it’s one of the last places where you are really spending time together, and you can really get to know them,” Kett said.

An avid spearfisherman, Kett got hooked on the sport as a student at UC Santa Barbara, and has since worked as a dive instructor and charter boat captain in the area. “Fishing is about a passion for adventure,” he said.

Curlett, whose father taught him to fish at age five, passed on the tradition to his son and daughter when they were young. With Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary on his doorstep, he said he is keenly aware of the importance of protecting our marine ecosystems for future generations to enjoy. “I’m a believer in marine protected areas, when science says we need them,” he said.

Conservation, Confusion and Conflict

A common misconception among recreational anglers is that national marine sanctuaries are restricted, or shut off to the public. “We are surrounded by protected, preserved waters [in the Florida Keys] — but protected doesn’t mean closed,” Curlett clarified.

In fact, just two percent of national marine sanctuary waters is closed to any kind of recreational activity. Recreational fishing is both a popular and economically important activity in many sanctuary communities. Fishermen like Curlett, Kett and Mick Menigoz, a charter boat captain based in the San Francisco Bay Area, have all spent countless hours pursuing fish in the waters of the National Marine Sanctuary System. “I spend more than two-thirds of my time in the sanctuaries outside San Francisco Bay, mostly Gulf of the Farallones and Monterey Bay,” said Menigoz, who takes parties of up to 30 people on fishing excursions in his 65-foot boat.

Despite this, the many types of marine protected areas — sanctuaries and refuges and reserves, marine parks and monuments and conservation areas — can make it hard to figure out exactly what uses are allowed where. “In general, sanctuaries don’t prevent fishing, and neither do many MPAs,” Kett said. “But the definitions are not always the same nationally, and that causes confusion.”

Preserving Fishing for the Future

Ask Jack Curlett why he supports sanctuaries, and he will tell you that much has changed in the Florida Keys since he first started fishing there in 1985. “When I came

to the Keys 26 years ago, it wasn’t unusual to go out and have a great day of fishing, but you would hear people say, ‘You should have seen it 25 years ago,’” Curlett said. “I find myself telling people the same thing today.” He says the fish are smaller and less numerous now, which he attributes in part to better fish-finding technology.

Framed in terms of ensuring that our children and grandchildren have plenty of fish to catch, most fishermen are in favor of marine conservation. “I don’t think there’s a single fisherman out there who wants to hear that that fish he’s catching is the last one,” Kett said.

Today, Curlett said, more fishermen and fishing groups are already pushing for conservation measures like catch limits and gear restrictions. “I think people are more aware today that this resource is diminishing,” he said.

Voice of the Community

One way national marine sanctuaries ensure recreational fishermen have a voice in sanctuary management is through sanctuary advisory councils. Curlett, Kett and Menigoz are all involved in their local advisory councils, each representing the interests of community stakeholders and providing input to their sanctuary superintendent.

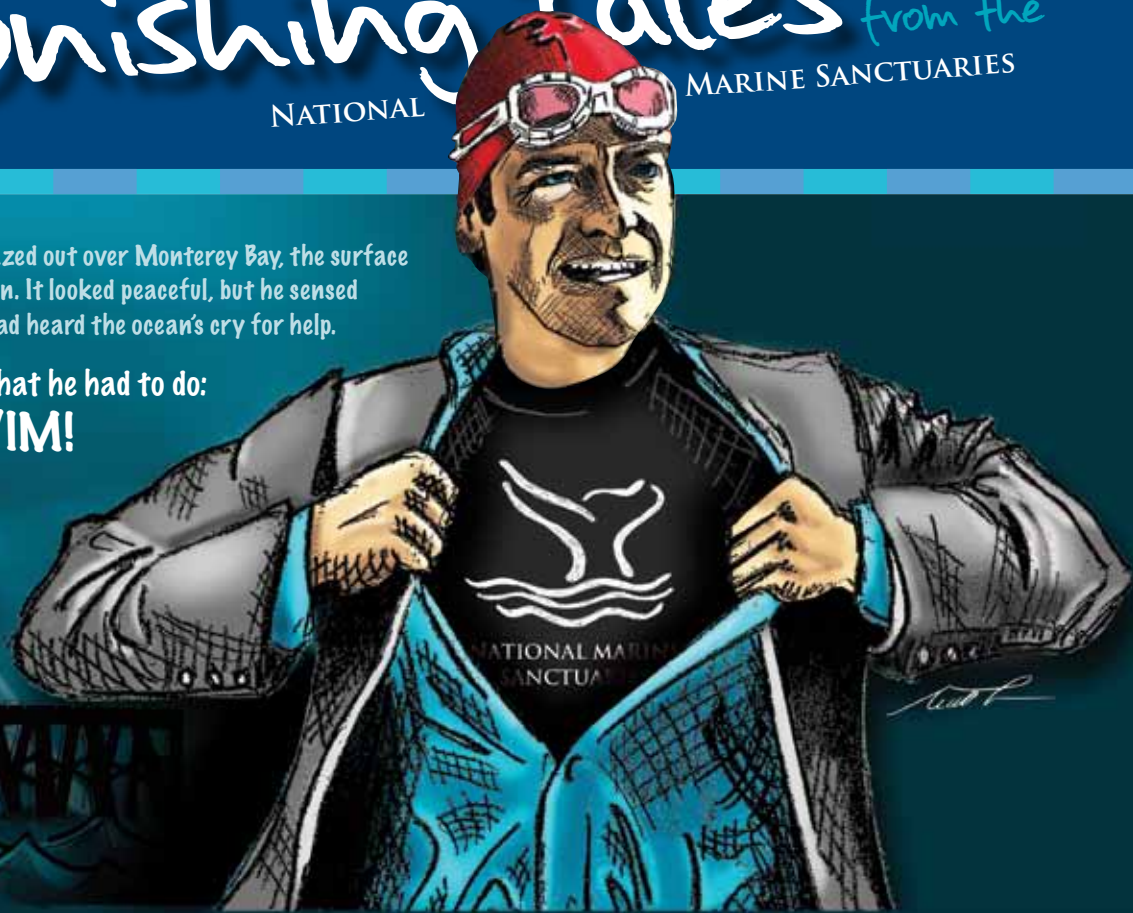
Curlett has served on the Florida Keys Sanctuary Advisory Council since 2004, when he learned of an open seat on the council. “I wanted to do something!” he said. “This water is our resource, it’s my resource.”

After all, Curlett knows the value of a day out on the water in a healthy, thriving national marine sanctuary. 🐟

Astonishing Tales from the NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES

Mild-mannered **BRUCKNER CHASE** gazed out over Monterey Bay, the surface of the water sparkling under a full moon. It looked peaceful, but he sensed trouble beneath the waves. Bruckner had heard the ocean's cry for help.

He knew what he had to do:
SWIM!



Ahead lay an epic journey across Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, one that few people had ever attempted.



Shortly after 4 a.m., Bruckner took a deep breath and plunged into the bottomless darkness. The water was like an icy shower, cold enough to send most swimmers scrambling for the boat. He took his first confident strokes of the grueling 14-hour voyage.



Bruckner soon realized he wasn't alone. He brushed against something, and his skin started to burn. Jellyfish. Tens of thousands of jellyfish, surrounding him on all sides. But he persevered, braving their stings with every stroke for a superhuman 28 miles!



Bruckner's heroic feat inspired people to care about the ocean, but he wasn't done yet. "I'm off," he said, "to swim more sanctuaries!"

To be continued!

Taking the PLUNGE

by Tracy Hajduk

YOUNG DIVERS DISCOVER THE WONDERS OF THE DEEP

When Kwadjo Tillman got the opportunity to scuba dive on a century-old shipwreck at the bottom of Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, he jumped in feet-first — literally.

Bubbles swirled around Kwadjo's mask as he plunged into Lake Huron, the burden of his heavy scuba gear suddenly light in the buoyant underwater world. Down he drifted, peering into the blue-green void. The rhythmic noise of his scuba regulator filled his ears. A hulking shape loomed out of the depths: the wreck of the 235-foot steamship *Montana*, lying fragmented and algae-covered on the lake bottom for nearly 100 years.

A 17-year-old aspiring marine scientist from Fairfield, Iowa, Kwadjo was one of three young members of the National Association of Black Scuba Divers (NABS) who traveled to Alpena, Mich., last summer to participate in a scientific expedition to the *Montana*. He worked side-by-side with underwater archaeologists as they searched for clues about the history of the ship, which caught fire and sank in 70 feet of water in an area known as "Shipwreck Alley" in 1914.

The highlight of the mission came when Kwadjo and two of his fellow NABS members discovered not one, but two, previously unidentified shipwrecks while searching for artifacts on the bottom of the lake. As these young team members found out firsthand, there are still plenty of secrets in our national marine sanctuaries waiting to be uncovered by the next generation of underwater explorers.

"There is no better way to get up-close and personal with the sea than scuba diving," Kwadjo said. "It's great recreational activity and can only be equated to sinking into another world."

Partnerships like the one with NABS are among the many ways the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries works to get young people interested in ocean recreation. Scuba diving is an important economic activity for many coastal communities, and encouraging new scuba divers helps promote continued interest and participation in the sport.

Last year, NABS brought its Youth Educational Summit to Florida

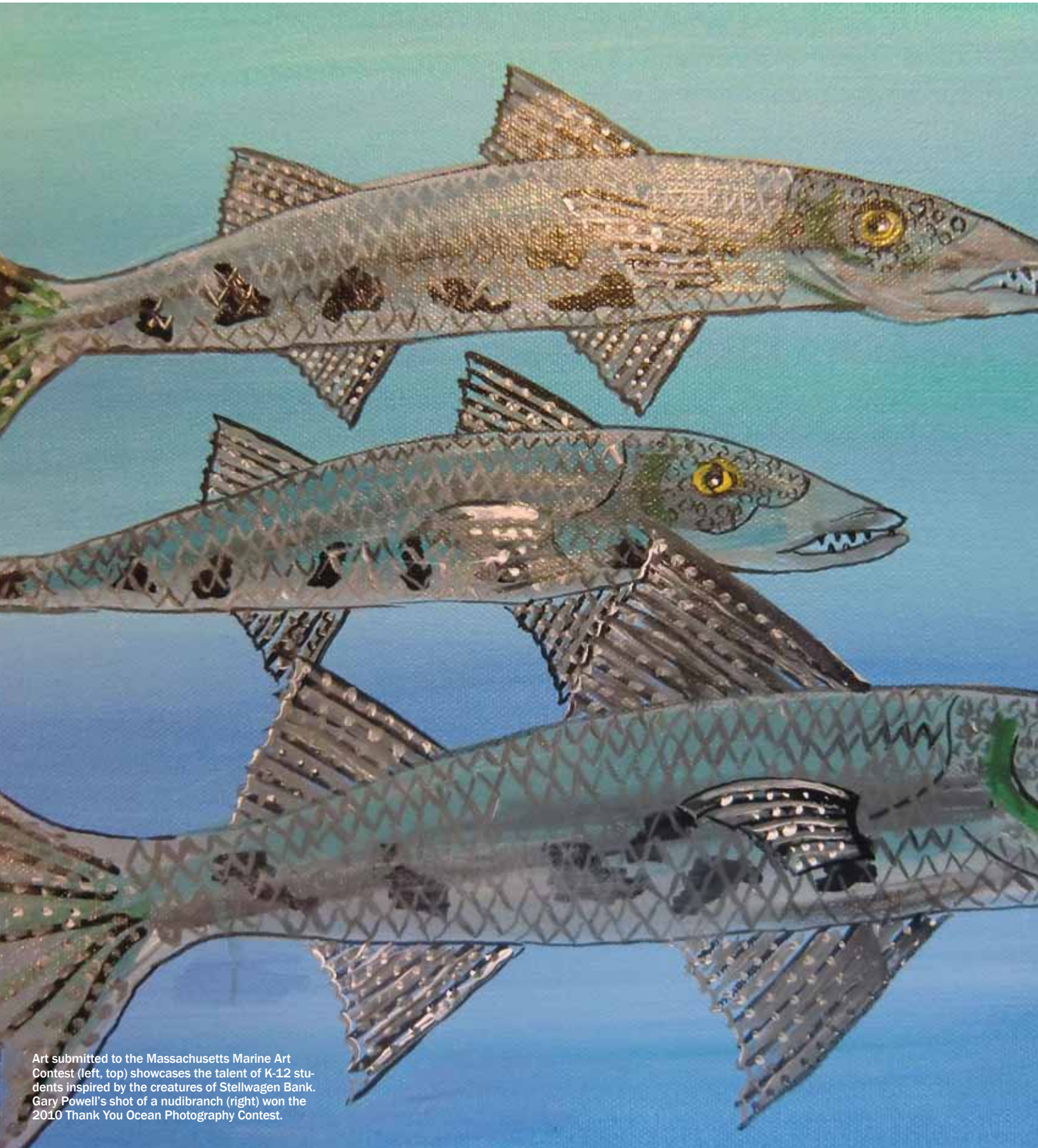


Clockwise from top left: Kwadjo Tillman checks his scuba gear before a dive in Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary; diving over the side of the boat ; Kwadjo flashes a peace sign underwater; a research diver documents the massive steam engine of the shipwreck *Montana*.

Keys National Marine Sanctuary, giving students like Kwadjo the chance to experience these special underwater places for themselves. "We will do anything that gets the kids in the water and excited," said NABS member Ken Stewart.

As Kwadjo and countless other young divers already know, the best way to gain an appreciation for the underwater world is to see it with your own eyes. Through diverse partnerships and outreach efforts, the national marine sanctuaries are providing more and more opportunities for our future ocean leaders to do just that. 🐠

Top Photos: Michelle Johnston; Bottom Photo: Tane Casserley



Art submitted to the Massachusetts Marine Art Contest (left, top) showcases the talent of K-12 students inspired by the creatures of Stellwagen Bank. Gary Powell's shot of a nudibranch (right) won the 2010 Thank You Ocean Photography Contest.



AN OCEAN OF INSPIRATION

by Sarah van Schagen

“When I get back from a dive trip, I’m absolutely refreshed, energized and excited, and I want to tell everybody what I’ve seen and how incredible it was.” Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary volunteer Jacqui Stanley has been scuba diving from a very young age. Currently an art teacher working with the Young Audiences of Houston program, she’s also an avid painter. Recently, she’s been combining her love of the ocean and art, creating artwork inspired by her dive trips to the Flower Garden Banks in the Gulf of Mexico.

Ocean Art: Drawing People to the Sea

What is it about the ocean that inspires Stanley to “pull out her paints” as soon as she hits shore? “The ocean is part of our consciousness — when you go to the ocean, you can just watch people and see that we’re all attracted to it,” she says. “It’s just magnificent.”

Stanley hopes to spread that enthusiasm by using her artwork to share the treasures of the Flower Garden Banks with others, from students in Houston’s low-income schools to art enthusiasts at the Galveston Art Walk. Often, they are shocked to discover what’s beneath the surface of the sanctuary, she says. “People just do not think that this beautiful place exists just 100 miles off the coast of Texas and Louisiana, and they always ask me if it’s real.”

Photographer Gary Powell can relate. Powell, who recently won first place in the Thank You Ocean Photography Contest for his photo of a nudibranch in California’s Morro Bay, co-founded the website BelowMorroBay.com to highlight the bay’s “spectacular” abundance of marine life. “Right off our coast, we have such a great resource, and we just love bringing the images to the surface to show people,” Powell said in an interview on ThankYouOcean.org.



Photo: Gary Powell

Educating & Inspiring Young Artists

Another creative competition with a watery theme is hosted by the Massachusetts Marine Educators in association with Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. Their annual Marine Art Contest asks K-12 students to submit artwork featuring the “amazing ocean creatures” of Stellwagen Bank, with categories ranging from posters to computer graphics. The contest receives nearly 400 entries a year from students around the world, and the winning artists get to see their artwork showcased in a traveling art exhibit.

“[Art] is a wonderful opportunity to teach across content areas,” Stanley says. During live online educational broadcasts hosted by sanctuary staff on the 2010 Aquarius Mission: “If Reefs Could Talk,” she and scientist Dr. John Burke hosted an art segment in which they described and illustrated creatures in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, then invited students watching the program to create and send in their own illustrations. Stanley says she was “blown away” by the level of detail in the students’ work.

“Art is an amazing tool because it allows the person to express themselves through the ocean ... It really speaks to their own interpretation of what the ocean is like, so they come to care about it, and when they care about it, they’re more likely to look after it.”



TERRY GIBSON

President, North Swell Media & Consulting

Sanctuary Voices is a guest column featuring views and opinions from the national marine sanctuary community.

For more than a decade, I've consulted and volunteered for some of the most respected conservation groups, while enjoying various editorial jobs at prominent outdoor enthusiast magazines, including *Surfer Magazine*, *Saltwater*

Fly Fishing, *Florida Sportsman* and *Outdoor Life*. Those jobs keep me in and on the water — surfing, fishing and diving in natural areas throughout the Americas and beyond. They also keep me connected with some of the best resource managers and marine scientists, which helps inform what I observe in my watery wanders.

Where managers work closely with knowledgeable stakeholders and scientists to create well-managed protected areas, it's clear to me that ecological diversity, abundance and resilience are better conserved and enhanced, as are the fishing, diving and surfing within such areas. Call them what you will: marine protected areas, sanctuaries, parks. But given the many serious threats to our oceans and coasts, we need to make sure that the National Marine Sanctuaries Act gets reauthorized and adequate funding is provided to protect and enhance our resources and water-loving ways of life.

Protected areas place layers of protection around the resources, while providing public forums for improving the management of the resources. One of my favorite cases in point involves seagrass protection in the protected area that I fish and dive in most frequently, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Careless boaters were running out of the channels and scarring the vital seagrass flats in Florida Bay. I'd fished those areas for bonefish, tarpon and permit often enough to know the flats fishing guides' frustration with personal watercraft users and pleasure boaters that were tearing up the resources and scaring off the target, catch-and-release species that bring millions of fishing tourism dollars into the Keys economy.

When scientists advocated for a "pole and troll" boating zone that would restrict the use of combustion engines, knee-jerk reactions from fishing pundits warned that such zones were just a plot to limit fishing access. Fortunately, trust between stakeholders and managers had already been established through the Florida Keys Sanctuary Advisory Committee. Members and managers worked cooperatively to design and implement these zones in ways that preserved reasonable access while achieving the explicit conservation goal of protecting seagrass.

Soon, guides were asking for more no-combustion-engine zones, because the existing zones had made things better for the fish and fishermen. It's worth noting that "pole and troll" zones have been successfully replicated and accepted for the same reasons in other protected areas, such as the Cape Canaveral National

Seashore, where the popular red drum had become nervous wrecks due to so many boats motoring over the flats.

I've been to places like the Dry Tortugas National Park, where several of the most important spawning sites in the region — the "fountainheads" of important fish populations — are off-limits and guarded against poaching. Last May, I had the chance to make a bunch of dives on a mutton snapper aggregation there with biologists from the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission. I saw more mutton snapper and nesting ocean triggerfish during any one dive than I've seen in a hundred dives off southeast mainland Florida over the past few years.

The final design of Dry Tortugas and its no-take areas came about because scientists and managers worked closely with knowledgeable fishermen to figure out the most important places to protect from human impacts including fishing to the greatest extent practicable. There's considerable anecdotal evidence and some oceanographic reasons to believe that mutton snapper fishing has improved far up the coast because the spawning aggregations in that sanctuary are protected. The vast majority of local fishermen, myself included, would not support reopening those areas to fishing.

My point is that these success stories came about because of healthy dialogue and debate between scientists, managers, and knowledgeable stakeholders including anglers, commercial fishermen and divers. Right now, elected officials and decision-makers are hearing too much from some unenlightened fishermen about "bad data" and draconian management measures. They need to hear more from those of us with positive experiences working with managers of protected areas.

Our leaders need to understand that protected areas provide opportunities to make better, fairer management decisions, decisions that will keep us in and on the water for the long haul. We need funding to manage and improve existing protected areas through habitat restoration, and we need more protected areas such as national marine sanctuaries, period.



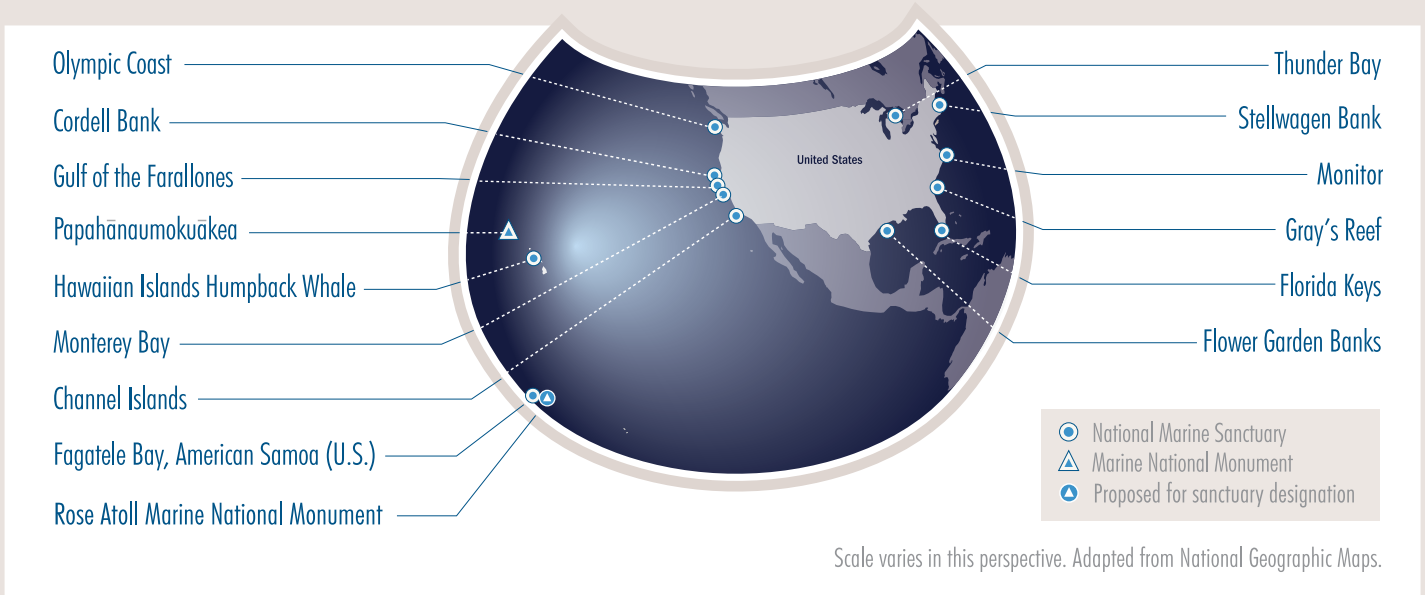
Photo: Terry Gibson



SANCTUARYSNAPSHOT Wildlife watching is one of the many popular activities offered by the national marine sanctuaries. In this photo taken by Roger Conrad, National Park Service Ranger Ian Williams shows visitors a sea lion haul-out on San Miguel Island, just beyond the waters of Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

SANCTUARY SYSTEM

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a system of 14 special ocean areas, encompassing more than 150,000 square miles of ocean and Great Lakes waters. The system includes 13 national marine sanctuaries and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The sanctuary system is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which manages sanctuaries by working cooperatively with the public to protect sanctuaries while maintaining compatible recreational and commercial activities. Sanctuary staff work to enhance public awareness of our nation's marine resources and maritime heritage through scientific research, monitoring, exploration, educational programs and outreach.



The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is part of NOAA's National Ocean Service.

VISION - People value marine sanctuaries as treasured places protected for future generations.

MISSION - To serve as the trustee for the nation's system of marine protected areas to conserve, protect and enhance their biodiversity, ecological integrity and cultural legacy.

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